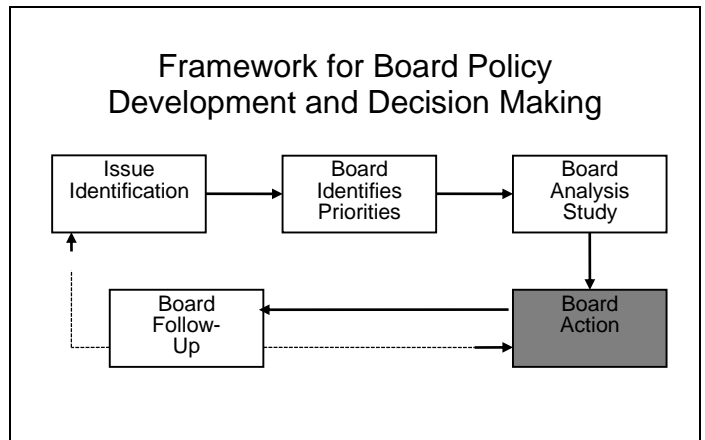


# Iowa State Board of Education

## Executive Summary

January 21, 2016



<b>Agenda Item:</b>	Great Prairie Area Education Agency Paraeducator Preparation Program Approval
<b>Iowa Goal:</b>	Goal 1: All children will enter school ready to learn. Goal 2: All PK -12 students will achieve at a high level.
<b>State Board Role/Authority:</b>	Iowa Administrative Code section 281—80 grants authority to the State Board of Education to set standards and procedures for the approval of programs for individuals who seek a paraeducator certification issued by the Board of Educational Examiners.
<b>Presenter:</b>	Marietta Rives, Consultant Bureau of Educator Quality
<b>Attachments:</b>	1
<b>Recommendation:</b>	It is recommended that the State Board make a one-year, conditional approval for the paraeducator preparation programs submitted by Great Prairie Area Education Agency. This program approval will extend through January of 2017.
<b>Background:</b>	Legislation originally passed in 1998 and revised in 2000 created a voluntary paraeducator certification. The legislation was prompted by the need to have well-trained paraeducators providing assistance to students and teachers.

**Program Recommendation**  
**January 21, 2016**

Great Prairie Area Education Agency  
Generalist, Level 1  
Special Needs

Iowa's voluntary paraeducator certification program is one way for paraeducators to meet the requirements set forth in No Child Left Behind. An additional benefit of this program is that certification will establish realistic opportunities for upward mobility through a career ladder pathway for paraeducators.

The institution named above has submitted a request for approval or re-approval of programs to certify paraeducators in each of the listed content areas. Although the paraeducator certification program is voluntary, there are benefits to having certified paraeducators:

1. All learners will be better served and the quality of education and related services will improve with the availability of a better-prepared paraeducator workforce.
2. Paraeducators have mastered skills that are required to support and supplement teacher/provider programs.

In reviewing the programs, it is important to look for three major components:

1. Verification that each of the standards included in Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 80 have been met.
2. Verification that all standards and competencies of Chapter 22, Board of Educational Examiners administrative rules were included.
3. Verification that criteria to evaluate performance of the standards were present and appropriate.

**Strengths of the program:**

Certification courses are offered in a variety of modes and locations.

**Recommendation:**

Based upon the initial review the evidence of the Generalist, Level 1 and Special Needs program components submitted for consideration, the Great Prairie Area Education Agency's paraeducator programs are recommended for a conditional approval. This conditional approval will expire on January 30, 2017.